

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02108 01 OF 02 271133Z

44

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

IGA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00

RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SP-03 CIEP-03 LAB-06

SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-07 SS-20 STR-08 CEA-02 PA-04 PRS-01

L-03 H-03 AGR-20 DRC-01 DODE-00 EA-11 /215 W

----- 039449

O R 271055Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1556

USMISSION USUN

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 DAMASCUS 2108

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, SY

SUBJ: SYRIA: PL-480 TITLE I

REF: A. STATE 202948; B. STATE 212734 NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: SARG IS HAVING DIFFICULTY PUTTING TOGETHER STATISTICAL DATA WE HAVE REQUESTED ON WHEAT AND RICE. OUR PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS INDICATE FAIRLY GOOD FY 75 WHEAT CROP ALONG WITH NEED FOR CONTINUED TRADITIONAL IMPORTS OF WHEAT FLOUR AND RICE IMPORTS. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS POSITIVE DECISION TO SUPPLY SYRIA WITH BOTH WHEAT FLOUR AND RICE. WE PROVIDE BELOW TALKING POINTS FOR US OFFICIALS. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS IN MEETINGS WITH SYRIAN OFFICIALS HAVE STRESSED URGENCY IN OBTAINING STATISTICAL DATA REQUESTED IN EMBASSY NOTE OF SEPT 16 (BASED ON REF A) TO PERMIT WASHINGTON TO EVALUATE SYRIAN REQUEST FOR US FOOD COMMODITIES. SEVERAL MINISTRIES,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DAMASC 02108 01 OF 02 271133Z

INCLUDING AGRICULTURE AND SUPPLY ARE STILL WORKING
ON COMPILING DATA.

3. AT MEETING SEPT 26 WITH ECONOFF AND AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE FROM BEIRUT, DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE IBRIK OBSERVED THAT PUTTING TOGETHER DATA REQUIRES COORDINATION WITH SEVERAL SYRIAN OFFICES AND PROMISED THAT REQUESTED DATA WOULD BE SUPPLIED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (IBRIK IS WELL AWARE OF INTEREST OF PRES ASAD AND DEPUTY PMS KHADDAM AND HAYDAR, BUT WE ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO WHEN EXACTLY WE WILL RECEIVE REQUESTED DATA, DESPITE SEVERAL MEETINGS HELD SO FAR. WE ARE PUSHING IBRAIK HARD AGAIN BASED ON SEPT 29 WASHINGTON MEETING (REF B).)

4. EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED WHEAT/FLOUR AND RICE SITUATION USING AVAILABLE PUBLISHED DATA AND SOME INPUT OBTAINED DURING DISCUSSIONS HELD WITH SARG. EMBASSY PROVIDES FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS BASED ON DATA AVAILABLE:

A. ALTHOUGH NO ONE IS YET CERTAIN, SYRIA APPEARS TO BE IN FAIRLY GOOD SHAPE ON SUPPLIES OF WHEAT TO MEET FY 75 CONSUMPTION REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, SYRIA IMPORTED YEARLY AVERAGE OF 80,000 METRIC TONS OF WHEAT FLOUR DURING 1969 TO 1973, MAINLY FROM ITALY AND ROMANIA, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT (IN TERMS QUALITY) MILLING CAPABILITY. THIS IS WHEAT EQUIVALENT OF 110,000 METRIC TONS (AT .73 OR 121,000 METRIC TONS AT .66, LATTER RATE USED IN EC BRUSSELS 3669, MAY 31 FOR SOFT WHEAT). EMBASSY SEES CERTAIN ADVANTAGES IF US WERE TO PROGRAM FLOUR UNDER PL-480: FLOUR WOULD MOVE DIRECTLY INTO CONSUMPTION CHANNELS, NOT STOCKS; IT MEETS APPARENT TRADITIONAL IMPORT NEED; AND PROVISIONS FOR EXPORT LIMITATIONS WOULD BE SMALL TO COVER AVERAGE YEARLY 121 TONS SEMOLINA FLOUR EXPORTS CYS 1969 TO 1973.

B. FOR WHEAT, EMBASSY CONCERNED THAT SYRIANS WOULD FIND VERY DISTASTEFUL OUR IMPOSITION OF EXPORT LIMITATION ON WHEAT AS THERE IS POSSIBILITY, DEPENDING ON RAINFALL, THAT SYRIA COULD HAVE ANOTHER EXCELLENT WHEAT CROP IN 1975 AS IN 1972.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DAMASC 02108 01 OF 02 271133Z

C. RE 10,000 TONS OF WHEAT FOR JORDAN, MINISTER OF SUPPLY KABALAN (UNDER WHOSE MINISTRY FALLS THE CEREALS OFFICE) INFORMED AMBASSADOR SEPT 24 THAT THIS AMOUNT WAS BEING LOANED TO JORDAN, WHICH IN URGENT NEED, WITH THE PROVISION THAT IT BE REPAYED IN KING WITHIN THREE MONTHS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS NOT UNUSUAL PRACTICE BETWEEN SYRIA AND HER NEIGHBORS. AS FOR SYRIAN EXPORTS OF GRAIN OR RELATED PRODUCTS, FOLLOWING ARE STATISTICS FROM OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRADE PUBLICATION: (ON CY BASIS, METRIC TONS):

TARIFF CAT.	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
-------------	------	------	------	------	------

WHEAT	475	0	289	278,430	124,017
041.0 10/1					

WHEAT FLOUR	0	0	0	0	0
046.0 11/1A					

WHEAT SEMOLINA	139	129	33	175	130
046.0 11/2/ (2)A					

MILLED RICE	12	0	84	0	NEG
042.2B					

BARLEY	273,083	178,088	50	36,632	5,370
043.0 10/3					

CORN	69	NEG	0	16	2
044.0 10/5 26					

SORGHUM	7,626	0	NEG	172	0
045.9 20BL					
AND 2					

NOTE: 1972 AND 1973 WHEAT EXPORTS WERE DUE TO BUMPER
FY 73 CROP.

D. PRACTICALLY ALL OF SYRIA'S RICE REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN
AND ARE BEING MET BY IMPORTS, HALF FROM CHINA (PRC) AND
HALF FROM EGYPT. SYRIA'S FY 1975 RICE REQUIREMENTS OFFICIALLY
PUT AT 70,000 METRIC TONS. (COMMENT: EMBASSY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 DAMASC 02108 01 OF 02 271133Z

UNDERSTANDS THAT OF ALL COMMODITIES AVAILABLE FOR FY 75
TITLE I PROGRAMMING, RICE IS ENJOYING BEST SUPPLY
SITUATION.)

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 DAMASC 02108 02 OF 02 271140Z

44
ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

IGA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00

RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SP-03 CIEP-03 LAB-06

SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-07 SS-20 STR-08 CEA-02 PA-04 PRS-01

L-03 H-03 AGR-20 DRC-01 DODE-00 EA-11 /215 W

----- 039542

O R 271055Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1557

USUN NEW YORK 082

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 DAMASCUS 2108

E. WITH SUGAR, CANNED FISH, AND MILK CURRENTLY NOT ELIGIBLE FOR PL-480 PROGRAMMING, AND WITH PROBLEMS NOTED REF A FOR OTHER COMMODITIES, WE ARE LEFT WITH RICE AND WHEAT FLOUR AS POSSIBILITIES THUS MEETING ONLY TWO OUT OF EIGHT COMMODITIES SYRIA HAS REQUESTED. WE WOULD THEREFORE HOPE THAT DEPT COULD REVIEW FEED GRAINS AND VEGETABLE OIL SITUATION, PARTICULARLY LATTER, TO SEE IF IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS THESE COMMODITIES WITH SYRIANS IN ORDER TO MEET SARG EXPECTATIONS BASED ON OUR PREVIOUS PROMISES OF ASSISTANCE.

5. IN VIEW OUR INITIAL CONCLUSIONS, AND GIVEN LACK SO FAR OF OFFICIAL STATISTICAL RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS SHOULD SYRIANS WISH TO DISCUSS AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY ASSISTANCE WITH US OFFICIALS WHILE IN WASHINGTON/NEW YORK. WHEN AVAILABLE, WE WILL IMMEDIATELY FORWARD SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION DATA FOR WHEAT, HOPEFULLY MEETING DEADLINE IN REF B.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DAMASC 02108 02 OF 02 271140Z

BACKGROUND:

FONMIN KHADDAM MAY AGAIN RESTATE HIS DESCRIPTION OF SHORTFALL IN THIS YEAR'S SYRIAN WHEAT CROP (DAMASCUS 1919, PARA 8). BASED ON AVAILABLE INFORMATION, WE BELIEVE HIS SHORTFALL IS BASED ON BUMPER WHEAT GRAIN CROP EXPECTATION AND NOT ON LARGE SHORTFALL FROM CONSUMPTION LEVELS. HOPEFULLY, HIS ATTENTION CAN BE DIRECTED TOWARD SUPPLY/CONSUMPTION BALANCE AND NOT JUST REDUCTION ON SUPPLY SIDE.

SYRIA TRADITIONALLY IMPORTS ALL ITS RICE FROM

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND EGYPT. COMMODITY ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF RICE FROM THE US COULD REPLACE MUCH OF THESE IMPORTS.

TALKING POINTS:

--WE WILL GIVE SYRIAN REQUESTS FOR COMMODITY ASSISTANCE THE MOST SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION POSSIBLE GIVEN WORLD-WIDE SHORTAGES AND SMALLER-THAN-EXPECTED US HARVEST WHICH HAVE CREATED A TIGHT SUPPLY SITUATION.

--PROGRAMMING ELIGIBILITIES UNDER TITLE I OF PL 480 PRECLUDES SOME COMMODITIES AND THE RECENT US DROUGHT SITUATION CREATES A TIGHT SUPPLY SITUATION FOR US AT THIS TIME WITH OTHER COMMODITIES. WE THEREFORE MUST CONCENTRATE OUR STUDY ON WHEAT AND RICE AND POSSIBLY VEGETABLE OIL, ALTHOUGH VEGETABLE OIL IS IN SHORT SUPPLY.

--ON WHEAT, WE MIGHT WANT TO CONCENTRATE OUR EFFORTS ON WHEAT FLOUR, SINCE WE ARE STILL UNCERTAIN REGARDING SYRIA'S CURRENT WHEAT CROP, BUT AT THE SAME TIME WE KNOW SYRIA IS A TRADITIONAL IMPORTER OF WHEAT FLOUR.

--FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS, OUR RICE IS IN A RELATIVELY BETTER SUPPLY SITUATION, AND WE KNOW THAT SYRIA TRADITIONALLY IMPORTS RICE.

--WE LOOK FORWARD TO REVIEWING THESE QUESTIONS TOGETHER AND WE WILL WANT TO PROVIDE A MORE DETAILED RESPONSE WHEN WE HAVE RECEIVED THE STATISTICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DAMASC 02108 02 OF 02 271140Z

DATA WE HAVE REQUESTED.

6. COMMENT: IN LIGHT PROBABLE DELAY IN CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON THIS YEAR'S FOREIGN ASSISTANCE BILL, I BELIEVE STRONGLY WE MUST MOVE RAPIDLY TO PROVIDE FOOD ASSISTANCE IN WHEAT FLOUR AND RICE. THIS TRANSACTION WILL LIKELY BE THE ONLY EARNEST IN OUR BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS FOR MONTHS AHEAD OF OUR EXPRESSED INTENT TO BE HELPFUL TO SYRIA. OUR RESPONSE MUST BE GENEROUS ENOUGH TO HAVE A POSITIVE POLITICAL IMPACT.
MURPHY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WHEAT, RICE, IMPORTS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, PL 480 TITLE 1, FLOUR
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974DAMASC02108
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740272-1199
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974099/aaaaagyq.tel
Line Count: 270
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 202948; B. STATE 212734 NOT, AL
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 APR 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <10 JUL 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIA: PL-480 TITLE I
TAGS: EAGR, SY, US
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005